



National Park Service
U.S. Department of the Interior

Jewel Cave National
Monument / Wind Cave
National Park

11149 U.S. Hwy 16 B12
Custer, SD 57730
605-673-8300 phone
605-673-8397 fax
www.nps.gov/jeca

Jewel Cave National Monument / Wind Cave National Park News Release

Release Date: **September 30, 2011**
For Immediate Release

Contact: **Rene Ohms / Physical Science Technician / rene_ohms@nps.gov**

Jewel and Wind Caves Host Cave Rescue Seminar

Custer, S.D. - Jewel Cave National Monument and Wind Cave National Park hosted a National Cave Rescue Commission (NCRC) seminar from September 12 - 18, 2011. Twenty-five students and 9 instructors from South Dakota, Colorado, Utah, Indiana, California, and Nevada participated in the training.

The seven-day course consisted of extensive classroom and field activities, including lectures, hands-on demonstrations, and cliff and cave exercises, and culminated with a full-day mock rescue in Jewel Cave. During the mock rescue, the students were challenged to respond to an overdue caving team incident on the Hub Loop, one of Jewel Cave's recreational caving routes. Once the overdue team was located, an "injured" patient was hauled out of the cave in a rescue litter through multiple obstacles, including small crawlways and vertical drops. The mock rescue also included a "lost person" incident, which required the students to use skills learned throughout the week to carry out a search in Jewel Cave's maze of passages.

The National Park Service offered this training to their staff, volunteers, local cavers, and search and rescue team members, in order to build a resource base of trained individuals who can respond during an incident at either cave park.

"It is critical that the parks be prepared to respond to emergency situations underground, and hosting this NCRC training has helped us to attain a high level of preparedness," said Jewel Cave Superintendent Larry Johnson "Cave rescue is a specialized activity which differs from surface rescue in many respects, and it is important for rescuers to have the skills necessary to work in the challenging cave environment."

NCRC, an internal organization of the National Speleological Society, provides cave rescue training and maintains resource lists of trained individuals throughout the United States. For more information on NCRC, visit <http://www.caves.org/commission/ncrc/national/>, and for information on the National Speleological Society, visit <http://caves.org>.

NPS



Caption: A "patient" is lowered through a Jewel Cave passage during the mock rescue training. Photo courtesy of Anmar Mirza.

www.nps.gov

About the National Park Service. More than 20,000 National Park Service employees care for America's 395 national parks and work with communities across the nation to help preserve local history and create close-to-home recreational opportunities. Learn more at www.nps.gov.

EXPERIENCE YOUR AMERICA

The National Park Service cares for special places saved by the American people so that all may experience our heritage.